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REVIEW ESSAY

# New Scholarship on Academic Women: Beyond “Women’s Ways”

*Susan B. Twombly*

Brooks, Ann. *Academic Women*. Buckingham, Eng.: Open University Press, 1997. 142 pp.

Eggins, Heather, ed. *Women as Leaders and Managers in Higher Education*. Buckingham, Eng.: Open University Press, 1997. 174 pp.

Ferber, Marianne, and Loeb, Jane, eds. *Academic Couples: Problems and Promises*. Urbana: University of Illinois Press, 1997. 323 pp.

Marshall, Catherine, ed. *Feminist Critical Policy Analysis II: A Perspective from Post-secondary Education*. Washington, DC: Falmer Press, 1997. 210 pp.

Women have made great strides in gaining access to university faculty and administrative positions in the United States and other countries in the last few decades. For example, in 1994 women constituted 33% of full-time faculty at all ranks in the United States compared to approximately 25% in 1985. Although the percentage of women at the rank of full professor re-

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Susan B. Twombly is Professor of Higher Education in the Department of Teaching and Leadership at the University of Kansas. She has written several articles on academic women in the United States and recently published a study of academic women in Costa Rica. Address inquiries to her at Department of Teaching and Leadership, 202 Bailey Hall, University of Kansas, Lawrence, KS 66045; telephone (785) 864-9721; fax: (785) 864-5076; e-mail: stwombly@ukans.edu

mains low (17%) in U.S. colleges and universities, women do make up an increasing proportion of faculty at the assistant and associate levels (42.2 and 30.3, respectively) (NCES, 1997). Between 1986 and 1995 the percentage of women college presidents increased from 9.5% to 16.5% ("Daily Report"). Although these gains pale in comparison to increases in the overall student body, in which women are over half of all students, it is clear that women are becoming a numerical presence in higher education. These patterns of increasing numbers are repeated in many of the countries represented in the books discussed here; however, women constitute a dismally small percentage of faculty in many European and Asian countries (Altbach, 1997), and there are still far too many signs in the United States that increasing numbers has not been accompanied by changes in the fundamentally patriarchal nature of the academy. Philip G. Altbach (1997), editor of *The International Academic Profession*, concludes: "The majority of academics are men—in Japan and Korea, nine out of ten academics are male, while in Brazil, at the other end of the spectrum, the figure is six out of ten" (p. 9). Not surprisingly, men in these countries are also likely to hold the highest degrees and generally vastly outnumber women in the highest ranks (p. 9). Women seem to hold a higher percentage of academic posts in Latin America than in Asia, Australia, or Europe.

Following a wave of feminist scholarship dominated by compensatory and bifocal studies in which academic women were identified, their experiences described and then often compared to those of men (Townsend, 1993; Twombly, 1993), a new type of scholarship on women academics is appearing. The earlier scholarship often portrayed women as deficient according to a male standard, as victims of an unfair system, as exceptional, or as nurturant and collaborative women who eschewed any claims to authority (and who did not do well in the masculinist academy).

The four books reviewed here, responding to criticisms that earlier feminist research focused on a homogeneous group of middle-class white women who were presumed to speak for all women, reflect a postmodern attention to difference and power, more clearly emphasize what Marshall (1997) calls "power and politics feminism," and give greater attention to policy. Furthermore, a growing body of international research provides a perspective of academic women that challenges the earlier monolithic definitions of feminism and accounts of discrimination and disadvantage described by U.S. women. This new scholarship recognizes that understanding the relationship between power, gender, culture, and policy is important to changing women's status in the academy. Moreover, this new scholarship collectively suggests that women's place in the academy is much more complex than earlier research has suggested.

This review examines four recently published books that either take women as their focus of attention or deal with issues related to women. Of

the four, only *Academic Couples* is limited to the United States; the others are international in scope. The primary focus of all but *Women as Managers and Leaders in Higher Education* is women faculty. Because three of the books are collections of essays, I will first provide a brief overview of each, then attempt to answer the following question: What do these four books tell us about the condition of women academics in the countries covered and more generally? In the process of addressing this question I will also assess the condition/state of feminist scholarship in the 1990s. I will identify the authors of individual chapters in the text, followed by the book editor in parenthesis.

Although it is not fair to judge these books by a post hoc framework, two aspects of the Bensimon and Marshall's introduction to *Feminist Critical Policy Analysis II* provide a useful organizing structure for this review and a yardstick by which to assess current scholarship. First, as a method, feminist critical policy studies typically (a) pose gender as a fundamental category of attention and analysis; (b) focus on differences, local context, and specificity; (c) are concerned with the lived experience of women; (d) have institutional transformation as a goal; and (e) are openly political and change oriented. Second, critical feminist studies have contributed to a fuller understanding of several aspects of the academy: the patriarchal nature of higher education as an organization, the constraints on equity policies, the academic processes that reproduce gender inequities between men and women professors and students, and the gendered consequences of neutral practices (pp. 11–15).

### OVERVIEW OF THE BOOKS

*Academic Women* by Ann Brooks reports the situation for academic women in the United Kingdom and Aotearoa/New Zealand. Using a feminist framework, Brooks exposes the "discourses" of the academy, particularly the contradiction between "the model of the academic community characterized by equality and academic fairness . . . and the sexist reality of the academy" (p. 1). This contradiction is particularly evident in New Zealand, a country founded on the rhetoric of equality. For each country, Brooks uses multiple secondary sources to provide a historically based statistical overview of women in the academy, then develops a fuller picture of women's experiences in each country using survey and interview research methods.

Attention to gender equity in the academy is a much more recent phenomenon in the United Kingdom and New Zealand than in the United States; and research on academic women in the United Kingdom especially has lagged behind scholarship in other countries (Eggins, 1997). Brooks's contribution must be understood in this context. Although the feminist

theory and language of the introduction and two concluding chapters of Brooks's book are largely missing in the discussion of women's experiences, which at times seems to be an endless discussion of numbers, the book serves as a valuable baseline study. Readers not particularly familiar with the British or New Zealand faculty hiring, promotion, and appraisal processes would benefit from more description of these processes.

One of the contributions *Academic Women* makes is the sources it introduces. For example, in her final chapter, Brooks cites a number of Australian feminist theorists who have examined the relationship between the state and gender politics. The perspective Brooks provides takes us beyond a focus on individual or institutional structural explanations for women's status to a broader view of national politics. For her introductory and last two chapters alone, Brooks is worth reading.

*Women as Leaders and Managers in Higher Education*, edited by Heather Eggins, contains eleven essays that address women academic leaders in the United Kingdom. As Elaine El-Khawas notes in the foreword, Eggins's book examines how the training of individual women to assume management and leadership positions can be improved, looks at the institutional barriers to women's advancement, and also discusses how the broad culture influences women's advancement into management and leadership positions. Context chapters cover leadership, the ethics of leadership, and the job market. The case study section includes chapters on women and change, becoming a manager, Afro-Caribbean women, and UK women in top-level positions. A section on implementing change explores networking, work shadowing, and equal opportunities policies.

Unfortunately, this collection of essays is not tied together by either an introduction or a conclusion. It is not clear what the editor's central purpose was. In particular, the chapters in the context section seem unrelated. The case studies offered in Part II are its most interesting and provocative contribution.

Spousal/partner accommodation, or finding a suitable academic job for a "trailing spouse/partner," is a relatively new issue in higher education brought about by the rise in the number of women earning Ph.D.'s and seeking academic employment. *Academic Couples*, edited by Marianne Ferber and Jane Loeb, includes 11 individually authored chapters that address the scope of the issue and strategies for dealing with this growing phenomenon. Topics include: the context that contributes to an increase in academic couples; a history of academic couples; a history of African-American academic couples; unmarried academic couples, including gays and lesbians; the status of academic couples; scholarly productivity; institutional issues such as policies for married couples and families, the shift from anti-nepotism to partner-friendly policies; administrative issues; and programs for partners.

Although the book is not as “critical” (does not attempt to identify the oppressive aspects of the academy) as the other books in this group, neither does it view the issue as problem free. It is a well-conceived, balanced treatment of an increasingly important topic. *Academic Couples* is important for any institution that has or is considering implementing a policy or practice to accommodate academic couples.

Finally, *Feminist Critical Policy Analysis II: A Perspective from Post-Secondary Education*, edited by Catherine Marshall, uses the lens of feminist critical policy analysis to examine academic women’s issues globally. The first volume, also edited by Marshall, focuses on k–12 schooling. As the title implies, the goal of *Feminist Critical Policy Analysis II* is to introduce a new method of educational policy analysis that critiques, disrupts, and dismantles the tools, findings, and recommendations of conventional policy analysis by placing feminist concerns at the center of analysis. As Marshall says in the introduction to Volume I (an essay which I highly recommend), feminist critical policy analysis “look[s] behind the political foreground at the ideological background in discourse” (p. 18).

Volume II is divided into three parts: “The Legitimized Formal Policy Arena,” “The Politics of Silence and Ambiguity,” and “New Politics, New Policy.” The first part includes chapters on women managing for diversity, gender equity in a South African university, a critical evaluation of Affirmative Action, and the politics of women’s studies. The second part consists of chapters on women in the math/science pipeline, academic women in Canada, and the lesbian experience. Part III provides examples of attempts to employ feminist methods (to disrupt traditional practice) in higher education. The chapters examine feminist policy for adult learners, the integration of feminist thinking into the classroom, feminism in the physical education classroom, and critical reflections on feminist pedagogy. Several of the chapters were first printed as articles.

Marshall seeks to “name and develop a new field: Feminist Critical Policy Analysis” (p. ix). Her work complements much of the Australian scholarship examining the relationship of state and institutional policy to gender that Brooks cites. Although not all of the chapters seem directly related to policy analysis (unless one takes a broad view), this book is essential reading for feminist scholars of the academy. Bensimon and Marshall’s introduction to Volume II lays out feminist critical policy analysis, as only one example of the many interesting, provocative, and insightful essays in this book.

Three small gripes: Volume II is written to stand alone, however, readers would benefit from the fuller treatment of feminist policy in Volume I. Neither volume contains a conclusion that draws this diverse compendium of studies together. Perhaps a more serious concern is that sometimes it seems that feminist critical policy analysis is merely a series of ideas cobbled to-

gether from other theoretical perspectives. Now that Marshall has introduced this new approach, perhaps others may take up and further define feminist critical policy analysis as something more than the sum of its parts.

### ACADEMIC WOMEN: CONCEPTUALIZING THE PROBLEM

It is important to reflect on how these four books conceptualize the "problem" of academic women. Generally speaking, earlier feminist scholarship most often viewed women's lack of representation in faculty or administrative positions as one of women's deficiencies according to standards set by dominant groups or as a function of the structure of the organization itself. The first definition led to a focus on education and skill development, the second to restructuring the organization (i.e., flattening the hierarchy) and an emphasis on numbers of women. It was believed that once women reached a critical mass in an organization, the character of the organization would change in ways more favorable to or consistent with women's strengths. We now know that both training and restructuring are necessary but insufficient for organizations to shed their patriarchal ways and to become more "peoplearchal." In fact, over the last decade, numerous organizations have embraced many of the ideas of earlier feminist critics, such as flattened hierarchies, team work, and collaboration. These changes have not resulted in a gender revolution inside colleges and universities. How, then, do these four books individually and collectively conceptualize "the problem"?

#### *A Problem of Numbers*

Generally speaking, the tendency to define the problem by numbers is evident in all but the Marshall book. For example, Brooks bombards us with statistics regarding the number of women faculty in the United Kingdom and Aotearoa/New Zealand, suggesting that she believes the problem in these countries is at least partially one of numbers. And undoubtedly it is. The numbers and percentages of women faculty in these two countries is quite low. The positive fact is that Brooks is able to demonstrate real gains for women in terms of numbers (a depressing fact given the numbers presented) in both countries. Needless to say, the number of women administrators and managers is also small.

As a group, these books move beyond numbers to take on issues of power and policy, revealing how well-meaning equal opportunities policies have not been implemented or have not worked to bring the number of women into line with the percentage of women students or to end discrimination or unequal work experiences.

### *Women's Experiences*

The problem for women is also one of very unequal status and work experiences. Despite increasing numbers, women in the United Kingdom and New Zealand do not hold leadership positions or positions of power. They face poor promotion opportunities, lack job security due to their part-time positions, are not as productive as men, carry heavier teaching and advising loads, and feel discriminated against. In New Zealand, women were appointed at lower levels on the academic scale than their degrees and experience warranted and were less likely to have tenure although there is some indication that this pattern may have changed in recent years. Brooks argues that male faculties and administrators employ a range of masculinist practices (such as sexual harassment and lack of enforcement of equal opportunity plans) to counter the perceived threat of women. Ramazanoglu (cited in Brooks) labels these masculinist practices a new form of violence against women.

There was, however, sufficient variation in perceptions of experience within and between countries that Brooks concludes:

Academic women's responses to the issue of productivity and workload showed considerable variation, highlighting the fact that differences in perception and identity are significant factors in understanding the experiences of academic women in relation to productivity and workload (p. 108).

### *Other Definitions*

*Academic Couples* and *Feminist Critical Policy Analysis II* take different approaches to defining the "problem." The chapters in *Academic Couples* make a pretty convincing case that the number of academic couples is increasing. Thirty-five percent of male faculty and 40% of women faculty have academic spouses, and a substantial number of candidates in any search are part of an academic couple. The problem, with which this book is concerned then, are the effects of academic couples on scholarly productivity, how have/can/should institutions respond, and the barriers to establishing institutional policies to accommodate couples (broadly defined to include unmarried heterosexual as well as gay and lesbian couples). For Ferber and Loeb, policies and practices to accommodate academic couples are a rational solution to a growing phenomenon.

Rather than a problem of numbers, Marshall et al. in *Feminist Critical Policy Analysis* frame the problem as understanding the ideological basis of power and politics; they are concerned with critiquing, rather than merely identifying, the social relations of the academy. They are interested in showing how liberal policies have failed to achieve their objectives and conversely how feminist approaches can make a difference. Although Brooks claims to

use a feminist lens—obvious in the introduction and conclusion—the analysis itself is a fairly straightforward description of the problems faced by women academics. Eggins seems to take a much more traditionally liberal view of the problem, viewing it as a matter of training, access, support, etc.

### FEMINIST CRITICAL METHODS

To what extent do these books exhibit the five characteristics of feminist methods that Marshall identified, listed above?

1. Gender as a fundamental category. While for Brooks, Eggins, and Marshall, a concern with gender means a focus on women, *Academic Couples* is somewhat broader, since it considers the effects of having an academic spouse/partner on men as well as on women.

2. A real strength in all of these books is their attention to difference(s) and context. Brooks frames the experiences of British academic women within a context of difference (defined broadly to include age, ethnicity, marital status, parenthood, and academic status); however, there is little discussion of differences among women based on race, ethnicity, or sexual orientation—categories of difference increasingly defined in the United States. Rather, academic status differences (part-time/full-time, senior/junior) seem particularly important in understanding Brooks's findings.

New Zealand poses some real differences from the United Kingdom, namely, "issues of colonialism and postcolonialism, bi-culturalism and multi-culturalism, as well as issues of national identity" (p. 63). These issues are critically important to consider in relation to gender but, unfortunately, remain only partially explored in this book.

The editors of both *Academic Couples* and *Critical Feminist Policy Analysis* include a wide variety of topics. For example, Ferber and Loeb (*Academic Couples*) include a chapter on married African American couples and one on POSSLQ'S (persons of opposite sex sharing living quarters) and PSSSLQ'S (persons of the same sex sharing living quarters). The former chapter reveals how academic couples have been more accepted at historically black colleges and the latter, although based on a small sample, recognizes unmarried and gay and lesbian couples. Marshall (*Feminist Critical Policy Analysis*) includes chapters written by and/or reflecting the experiences of academic women in other countries (e.g., South Africa, Canada, the United Kingdom, Australia, the Netherlands), lesbians, and African Americans. Eggins (*Women as Managers and Leaders*) includes a chapter on Afro-Caribbean women who have achieved administrative positions in the United Kingdom. This chapter and that by Melanie Walker in *Feminist Critical Policy Analysis* provide interesting perspectives on dynamics of race and gender. Jocelyn Barrow (in Eggins) shows how Caribbean women who emigrate often arrive in Britain competing at standards equal to or better than



their British counterparts, due to the very high quality of secondary schooling. Walker shows how, in a South Africa emerging from apartheid, white and colored (mixed-race) males have combined forces to the detriment of African (black) men and all women in a South African university.

3. A focus on the lived experience of women. Bensimon and Marshall argue that feminist research frames both questions and answers from the perspective of women. All of the chapters contained in these books are authored or coauthored by women and ostensibly present themselves as focusing on focus on women's lived experiences. Having said this, it also seems that the questions posed in these books are not entirely free from male definition. Most of the authors, despite whatever transformative goals they might have, seem to accept the basic structure and processes of the academy. The questions they pose are derived from women's status relative to the patriarchal academy.

4. Have institutional transformation as a goal and (5) are openly political and change oriented. Only *Feminist Critical Policy Analysis II* claims explicitly transformative or interventionist goals, yet surely both Brooks and Eggins must hope that their scholarly contributions will lead to change. One of the strengths of these four books is that they do deal with policy, either at the institutional or state level. However, to the extent that the authors seek transformation, they seem to do so within the larger existing patterns of structures and processes in the academy. For example, three of the change chapters in Marshall deal with change at the classroom level. Certainly such change is critical; however, classroom intervention does not disrupt the institution itself. *Academic Couples* is mainly concerned about the existence, effectiveness, and effects of academic couples and related institutional policies to accommodate such couples.

## THE FINDINGS

To what extent do these four books contribute to a fuller understanding of the processes that promote gender inequities in the academy?

### *The Academy as Patriarchy*

To perhaps no one's surprise, the academy is still a patriarchal organization. The sheer numbers alone tell one story; however, they do not explain how the academy works to reproduce masculinist practices despite increasing numbers of women. Space permits me to only include a few examples to illustrate this point.

- Women in both the United Kingdom and New Zealand understood their underrepresentation in positions of power and leadership to be the result of "power, patronage and prejudice" (Brooks, p. 120). Factors contributing to this underrepresentation include the old boys'

network, a promotion system, "which identifies and defines 'productivity' in terms which disadvantage academic women," and failed equal opportunities policies (p. 120).

- Women managers and leaders experienced other difficulties. Women who held senior posts (what kind we are not told) reported high degrees of isolation, exhaustion, conflict between themselves and masculinist institutions, and frustration with women who undermined other women's efforts for change (Spurling in Eggins). Karen Walton shows how gender and social class interact to influence efforts to achieve a vice chancellorship or college principal position; she also relates the experiences of women who do reach managerial positions.
- The academy is heterosexist. "Julia," the subject of Estella Bensimon's study (in Marshall) demonstrates the interlocking nature of oppression. Although sexuality is typically viewed as a private matter, Julia's life history as a lesbian professor demonstrates how compulsory heterosexuality operates to silence and control her life and that of others who are "outsiders within."

### *Equity Policies: A Critical View*

A shared characteristic of these books is their emphasis on the larger social structure and on policy. Ann Brooks, Judith Glazer (in Marshall), Melanie Walker (in Marshall), Rosemary Deem and Jenny Ozga (in Marshall), Sandra Acker and Grace Feuerverger (in Marshall), Helen Brown (in Eggins), Phyllis Raabe (in Ferber and Loeb), and Elaine Shoben (Ferber and Loeb) all discuss equity policies. Of these, Brooks, Deem and Ozga, and Brown discuss equity policies in the United Kingdom and New Zealand, which have been in existence only since the early 1990s. These policies are interesting for several reasons:

- Equity policies in the United Kingdom and New Zealand are viewed as a necessary first step toward establishing gender equity in the academy. Brooks argues that these policies have shown some signs of progress in terms of the numbers of women faculty. However, most faculty she surveyed identified the gap between the idealism of policies and the reality of practice; such policies, they concluded, had had limited impact on the culture of the academy. Brown (in Eggins) essentially agrees but cites a couple of UK examples (University College London and Sunderland University) where such policies seem to have had a positive impact. She notes that the representation of women is so dismal in British universities that it should be easy to show small gains as a result of equal opportunities policies and that it is easier to use the policies to prevent discrimination than to effect positive change.

- Equity policies are constrained by the dominant culture (Walker in Marshall; Glazer in Marshall). First, Glazer shows how campus commissions on the status of women that emerged from equal opportunity policies in the United States clarify issues, set priorities, make recommendations, and collect data about the status of women only within a narrow band of options that are compatible with mainstream male values. Walker also uses the development of a gender equity policy to “trace patterns of power, of speaking over silence, and of the allocation of values, as well as struggles over whose version of reality counts” (p. 43) in a South African university. Citing Ball, Walker discusses how policies are made and implemented within existing regimes of power and inequalities and how policies construct their own discourse or truth (for example, that women should benefit from equal opportunity policies). Although gender policy had some initial success at Walker’s university (a gender equity officer was appointed with membership on many important committees), achieving racial and gender balance on the faculty proved more difficult. The gender policy unraveled when it confronted institutional culture and dominant values. By the end of Walker’s study, women were divided by differences in this racially stratified society in which colored men competed with white men and African men competed with women for space in the faculty. Not surprisingly women were the losers.
- The policy chapters in *Academic Couples* are a rather straightforward cataloging of family-work policies on college campuses. Shoben, however, discusses the legal background of policies that favor couples and deconstructs anti-nepotism policies that have been the major legal block to spousal/partner accommodation policies.

### *The Reproduction of Gender Inequities and the Gendered Consequences of Neutral Practices*

Many seemingly “neutral practices” contribute to the existence and reproduction of gender inequities. Some of these practices documented by these four books are:

- Business rhetoric and practices. Andres Spurling (in Eggins) and Deem and Ozga (in Marshall) suggest that the “new” British universities have replaced the machismo of the traditional academy with the “machismo of the business culture.” This finding is consistent with Slaughter’s (1993) conclusion that university reorganization has differentially and adversely affected women. One wonders how the new interest in efficiency, external grant dollars, use of the productivity indicators, etc., will affect women in academe.
- Accelerated promotion and exploitation. Spurling and Janet Powney (both in Eggins) suggest that rapid growth has resulted in women

being promoted into management positions before they had the necessary complement of skills and experiences to succeed. This development has resulted in peer jealousy, lack of network and support systems, and the escalation of work-family conflicts. Furthermore, Powney argues that women are exploited by being "allowed" to rise to deputy positions (e.g., deputy chairperson) (but not higher) as evidence that equal opportunities policies are working.

- Academic work. Powney (in Eggins) and Brooks both observe that women are peripheralized on localized committees with few opportunities to serve on university-wide bodies. Committees were often identified by the surname of a male member; thus, regardless of the work done by women, they received less credit. Committee meetings also frequently conflicted with other responsibilities of women. In "Enough is Never Enough," Sandra Acker and Grace Feuerverger (in Marshall) concluded that even though Canadian academic women worked very hard, cared for others, and participated as good citizens, they feel "bad" because the reward system prevents them from ever feeling "good enough" (p. 129).
- Hiring and promotion processes. Brooks and Eggins pay close attention to hiring and promotion processes in the United Kingdom and New Zealand. However, although we learn that the hiring and promotion processes are not gender neutral, we really do not receive enough information to understand how they work (or do not work). Walton (in Eggins) shows, on the other hand, how the hiring process for vice chancellorships or college headships is absolutely structured to favor status and to privilege men. Women seldom make the lists of suitable candidates for such positions; however, women who do are proven leaders often in fields outside the academy, such as ambassadors or other government officials. Lack of appropriate springboards for top-level positions cause women to move up more slowly than men, and women who rise to the top often feel little responsibility to help others. In fact, there was not universal agreement that mentors were a good thing.
- The appraisal process. Brooks provides some discussion about the system of job appraisal that is a crucial mechanism in the promotion process. Although many New Zealand women had not experienced appraisal, there was some evidence that appraisal could be problematic for women who had male department chairs. Again, this process is not explained sufficiently for readers unfamiliar with the academic system in the United Kingdom and New Zealand.

## CONCLUSION

Our understanding of the situation of academic women benefits substantially from the cross-national feminist perspectives contained in these four books. We learn much about similarities and differences created by social, political, and economic contexts. Furthermore, as Brooks reminds us, feminism itself takes different forms in different countries. Collectively these books move us beyond “the misogyny of the first three phases of feminist scholarship wherein women are either altogether invisible or are seen only as exceptional, victimized, or problematic relative to dominant groups” (Anderson, 1988, p. 50). They examine women’s experiences from women’s point of view and reveal the complex relationship between and among context, the academy, gender (and differences within gender), and power. In these books, we see an increasing recognition that women construct feminism, oppression, and change differently depending on a wide range of characteristics including, but going beyond, race/ethnicity and gender. Moreover, these books show the limitations of such frameworks as feminist phase theory (Tetreault, 1985) in classifying scholarship on women. Independently and collectively, these studies contain multiple levels and foci simultaneously. Solutions to women’s status are no longer as simple as developing knowledge (as in women’s studies), training, or flattening the organizational hierarchy. We begin to see women as not only victims but as active resisters, even critiquing feminism itself.

Carmen Luke (in Marshall) argues that feminists who reject claims of authority and power, have sided with “good girl feminists” who view women as nurturant, collaborative, antihierarchal, etc. This argument places feminist academics in the odd position of being in power and authority (in the classroom if nowhere else) while rejecting the very foundation of their being in those positions. Coupled with a rejection of power and authority is what Luke calls “feminism’s first principle of difference(s).” Together, these two ideas have “potentially disabling consequences for transformative politics” (Luke, qtd. in Marshall, p. 190). How can feminists claim a standpoint, asks Luke, if they do not make some commitment to authority? She argues that women must “disengage from their anxieties about authority and power” (p. 206) and make explicit feminism’s own claims to power and authority. Collectively this new group of books seeks, as Luke suggests, to reclaim power, authority, and politics through attention to policy. One thing is certain. In the face of a patriarchal system that appears to be changing at a snail’s pace despite increasing numbers of women academics, feminist scholars must engage in “critical feminist policy analysis.” We must continue to critique seemingly neutral policies and practices of the academy. Whether this shift to “power and politics feminism” (Marshall) will result in greater changes than earlier approaches, only time will tell.

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